

October 21, 2018

ORDER IN WORSHIP!

1 Corinthians 14:20-40

Last week, we talked about 2 of the 3 purposes Paul had for writing this portion of his letter to the churches in Corinth:

- 1) Pursue love** – as a hunter would prey
- 2) Zealously desire Spirit's gifts** - chiefly prophecy/tongues
 - These 2 gifts communicate God's will & plan
 - Prophecy in a common language builds up believers
 - Tongues can do the same – *but only if interpreted!*

This week, we'll tackle the third of Paul's purposes for writing:

3) Worship services must be orderly & edifying to all!

-20-25) Paul uses an OT passage – *Isaiah 28:11* – to reiterate what he's already said about the distinctions between the gifts of prophecy & tongues – especially regarding their respective target audiences – believers vs. unbelievers.

-21) Isaiah prophesied that even God would utilize foreign tongues to speak to His people, Israel. But they still would not heed His call! *That's what qualified them as unbel!*

-22-23) This is proof that tongues is a gift used toward unbelievers – *for Israel was apostate!* But prophecy is a gift that edifies the church by revealing the mysteries of God to believers in common language.

-24-25) In a worship service, even where unbelievers are present, the gift of prophecy is still of greatest value because all can understand what is being said, & unbelievers are convicted by God's truths, confessing He is certainly among His people.

ILLUS. In order to tie back into SHAPE, I think I'll ask you to come forward for a testimony about ministry: ***"How is it going in ministry with the youth?"*** You answer in Italian - all glory to God for what you're experiencing with them. I'll be stunned that I didn't understand a word that you said; ask if the congregation understood what you said. Did that help you to worship God? Ask another question: ***"In what ways has God confirmed your call to minister to them?"*** Answer again in Italian. ***"Did you understand Joel's testimony? What should happen in order for us all to benefit?"***

Adina stands, ***"I can interpret Joel's message!"*** - & does!

Objectives: 1) Tongues aren't scary; 2) we never have to fear the

Spirit or His gifts; and 3) interpretation changes everything!

-26-33) Paul now summarizes the components of orderly worship services: psalms (songs), teaching, revelation, tongues & interpretations – all done in love for everyone's edification!

Paul's stipulation is this: that each component must be done individually & separately; that they be limited in number; and that every tongue must be interpreted for the benefit of all who hear because our God is orderly & peaceful, not confusing.

-34-35) Paul begins to address another kind of potential confusion in worship services: women/wives speaking out.

Don't Panic! This is a cultural phenomenon that had to do with pagan temple worship practices in the regions near Corinth.

Women priestesses (*and you know in biblical history only men were used in temple services – specifically men from Aaron's line between ages 20-50!*) led the worship of idols in these temples. They often spoke unintelligible messages that had to be "interpreted" by scribes. Even worse, sometimes these priestesses led prostitution among their worshippers. In order to avoid confusion, Paul completely eliminated women's voices in worship services, thereby ensuring that the worship of the On, True, Living God would never be mistaken for the worship of idols. ***Did Paul overreact?*** Maybe, but this threat of confusion no longer exists in our day as it did in Paul's time.

Here is an example of a corrective command that had unique application in Paul's day and location that is no longer needed today to retain order and avoid confusion in our worship

INVITATION:

- 1) Are you open to all the Spirit's gifts?
- 2) Are you available for any ministry Jesus wants to accomplish thru you?
- 3) Are you worshipping God thru the elements all elements of service?

Isaiah 28:11 (NLT): **11)** *So now God will have to speak to his people through foreign oppressors who speak a strange language!*

MEDITATION: Genesis 2:18-23 (NLT)

Our God is a God of order, reason, process & peace, not confusion! We see this truth from the first page of His written word in the story of creation. Each day, God spoke into being progressively the elements needed to support human life on earth so that man could meet/know God! In fact one theologian puts it this way: *“In order to think like God, human existence...is understood in the light of Christ’s coming. (Christ didn’t come because of man; man was created because Christ would come!) Creation is the first act of the triune God preparing for the advent (coming) of the Father’s Son. It sets the stage for His story, and ours in Him. There can be no incarnation and no adoption (salvation) in Jesus if there is no Creation, no people, no relationship, and no living context. Creation establishes the place where the Trinity will become one with Humanity.*

God invited Adam to join Him in ordering His creation!

18) Then the LORD God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is just right for him.” 19) So the LORD God formed from the ground all the wild animals and all the birds of the sky. He brought them to the man to see what he would call them, and the man chose a name for each one. 20) He gave names to all the livestock, all the birds of the sky, and all the wild animals. But still there was no helper just right for him. 21) So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep. While the man slept, the LORD God took out one of the man’s rib and closed up the opening. 22) Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib, and he brought her to the man. 23) “At last!” the man exclaimed. “This one is bone from my bone, and flesh from my flesh! She will be called ‘woman,’ because she was taken from ‘man.’”

Even the creation of animals inhabiting the earth is for the benefit of mankind! These animals identified for Adam his greatest need...a corresponding opposite – someone like him who can speak into his life and challenge his perspective to see more clearly & enjoy life more fully. God creates with order because He is orderly; He loves diversity because He is diverse; God reveals Himself to us so that we can know & worship Him. When you worship an orderly God, you do so in orderly fashion

SERMON in a SENTENCE: Order in Worship